2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

The Jog Mañjhi then says to the best-man: Please shave the bridegroom; and he does this. For shaving he gets two half-seers of flattened rice, two half-seers of rice, salt, and tobacco. Thereupon they take the bridegroom to the water in the marriage-shed. And they bring out two yokes and find a sword. They make the bridegroom sit down on the two yokes and make his father stand in front of him, holding the sword resting on his head. The Jog Mañjhi pours water with a loṭa from the omen-pot on the sword, and the water drips down on the head of the bridegroom, who is sitting behind his father's back. Thereafter they take the sword away, and the conductress of ceremonies bathes the bridegroom with the water of the omen-pot. 585

Now the bridegroom's party make themselves ready; they take food and drink beer in the bridegroom's home. While they are eating and drinking the anointing girls anoint the bridegroom, put necklaces and a solid neck-ornament on him and also apply eye-paint to his eyes. At this time they sing (in corrupt Bihari): [539]

How far away, how far away is the house of my bride's father?
How far away is the house of my father-in-law?
From here is the Ganges river, from there is the Jabo river,
Between these two, my boy, is the house of thy bride's father.

The oil and turmeric not spent in anointing they give into the marriage-broker's charge. The Jog Mañjhi now says to the bridegroom's parents: Please bring out the cloths for the bride, the red and white striped cloths, the cloths for the bride's grandmothers, the (turban) cloth for the bride's youngest brother, sindur for the bride's parents, oil for the bride's parents, Neem, ricinus leaves, and a little husks. They bring these things out to him, and he arranges them in a flat basket, and giving it into the marriage-broker's charge he says to him: Here are your things, see. [292]

Next the best-man asks for five Sal-leaves, a small packet of sindur, and one handful sun-dried rice. They give him this, and he ties it up in his clothes. Thereupon the best-man puts a turban on the bridegroom, and the bridegroom's party all go out. The bridegroom's mother arranges a loṭa with water and molasses in a leaf-cup, and his father ties money up in his clothes. They go to the Mañjhi than. Here they spread out a mat, and the bridegroom's mother sits down on it. She lets the bridegroom sit on her thigh. When he has sat down, she gives her son molasses into his mouth. She washes his mouth and gives him a little water to drink. The bridegroom now takes a rupee into his mouth, and his mother sucks him a little. His mother holds out her hand, and the bridegroom lets the rupee he has taken into his mouth fall out into his mother's hand. This they call sucking money, and this is the mother's right.

The bridegroom, the best-man, the bridegroom's follower, and the anointing girls now bow to the Mañjhi haṛam (the deceased one), and a small pot of beer, that they have [769]

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

SANTAL PARGANAS

The old Santal would not grow potato due to their conservative instincts even when Pontet asked them, now they grow it along with tomato. The women now wear mill-made saris and in the urban areas of Santal Parganas, they seem indistinguishable from their Hindu sisters, because in fairs and rallies, they generally dress alike. Some widows, it has been seen at Bolpur, dress themselves in white. It is interesting to hear that in some areas, there is lesser divorce. And due to the impact of new ideas women's right in inheritance is being slowly recognised by the state and the society through indirect legal fictions.

With ideas of reform in the atmosphere, some acting as disintegrating forces, others operating on a constructive basis, it was no surprise to us to come across a manifesto signed by some prominent educated Santals of Bengal and some parts of Bihar calling upon their brethren of Midnapore, Bankura, Manbhum, Singbhum and other areas to engage in social reforms for the maintenance of their tribal honour. It stated that the Santals had firmly resolved that:

1. No Santal, man or woman, should drink *Pochoi* (rice-beer) in shops as the tribe had been ruined by drink while the grog-shop owners and *mahajans* were becoming rich. Temperance would help the Santals financially.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

There are many individuals famed in some degree as physicians. Some are equivalent to the general practitioners of the West, while others are specialists who possess remedies for particular diseases. There are others who might be described as veterinary physicians. When, however, an illness persists the patient and the relatives suspect that some supernatural agency is at work, and they then call in the *ojha*, or magician. The *ojha* is not necessarily a Santal, though there are now so many Santals who are learned in *ojha* art that it is usually possible for a Santal to be called. They are men possessed of special powers who have gone through a period of training, followed by an initiation ceremony at the hands of an *ojha*, and they in turn pass on their knowledge to their own disciples. Tradition says that formerly this training was strenuous and serious. It took the form of a course that lasted from May until October, the time of the *Dāsāĕ*, which is the same as the Dasserah festival of North India and the Durga Puja in Bengal. Throughout this period the disciples had to attend at the house of the *ojha* every evening until finally they were initiated. At the conclusion of this ceremony the *ojha* used to take his disciples on a begging expedition through the surrounding villages on three successive days.

These begging parties are a familiar sight in the countryside during *Dāsāĕ*, and they represent almost all that is left of the old initiation schools conducted by the *ojhas*. Every village has its bands of youths who meet each night for a month to practise the songs and dances and then go out to collect rice and cash from the neighbours. It is at this time that the *buaṅ* is used. When the young men sally forth they are dressed in picturesque fashion. On this occasion alone men are permitted to wear women's dress. They put on *saṛis* shaped like a skirt and a small waistcoat, a garment worn by the women in many parts of North India, though it is not normally worn in Bengal. They also don earrings, bangles and anklets, while on their heads they wear turbans in which they fasten peacock feathers.

These bands have little relation to the *ojhas* and they operate under their own leaders. One of the links remaining between this practice and the *ojhas* is the reference in some of the songs to the old *gurus* of the magicians, and in particular the original *guru*, a mythological person named Kāmru. The name may possibly refer to a person who came from the western districts of Assam, a region known as Kamrup, but he is now entirely mythical. He is regarded as the originator of magical knowledge and as belonging to the race of *bongas*. According to one version, he is a